

## Over 185 Organisations Warn EU Failure to Suspend EU-Israel Association Agreement Violates Fundamental Human Rights Commitments

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21 April 2026 marks a defining moment in the European Union's (EU) external conduct – one that has inflicted profound damage on its reputation, credibility, and purportedly principled foundation. By refusing to suspend the EU-Israel Association Agreement, the EU has demonstrated a clear prioritisation of economic interests through its complete abandonment of the rule of law, human rights, and fundamental legal principles.

The EU has historically professed an unwavering commitment to human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and human rights – the **values** upon which the EU claims to be founded. The **aims** of the EU within the wider world include commitments to uphold and promote its values and interests; contribute to peace and security and the sustainable development of the Earth; contribute to solidarity and mutual respect among peoples, free and fair trade, eradication of poverty and the protection of human rights; and ensuring the strict observance of international law.

These commitments are further codified in **Article 2** of the EU-Israel Association Agreement, which designates “respect for human rights and democratic principles” as an “essential element” of the Agreement and the principles upon which the provisions are based. Given these human rights commitments, in early 2025 a majority of European governments, citing concerns over potential violations of Article 2, requested a formal review. By June 2025, the EU had circulated a **document** summarising “serious allegations of grave violations of international human rights law (IHRL) and international humanitarian law (IHL)”. Despite concluding that “there are indications that Israel would be in breach of its human rights obligations”, the bloc took **no decisive action** to counter Israel's live-streamed genocide of the Palestinian people.

- Nearly a year later, that inaction has hardened into policy. By maintaining its existing relationship, the EU has effectively signalled its commitment to remaining complicit in Israel's commission of mass atrocity crimes, including its ongoing genocide against the Palestinian people, by refusing to alter its relationship with the settler-colonial apartheid regime. This position has been adopted in full awareness, and total disregard, of overwhelming legal and evidentiary developments, including:
- Six rulings by the International Court of Justice concluding that Israel's policies and practices are unlawful, including by amounting to plausible genocide;
- Two arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Defence Minister Yoav Gallant for war crimes and crimes against humanity;

- Over two dozen reports by UN bodies outlining Israel's varied forms of violence against Palestinians and the need for the international community to take action issued since October 2023;
- Countless statements by UN experts highlighting the illegality of Israel's conduct in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT); and
- The abundance of corroborated evidence on rapidly escalating violations of the fundamental human rights of Palestinians by Israeli authorities, including the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF), and illegal settlers.

The EU's position further disregards a landmark European Citizens' Initiative – '[Demand the full suspension of the EU-Israel Association Agreement in view of Israel's violations of human rights](#)' – which has garnered over one million signatures. It also stands in direct contradiction to the unequivocal [call](#) by 20 UN experts for the immediate suspension of the EU-Israel Association Agreement, stating that "the EU cannot credibly claim to uphold human rights while sustaining preferential trade with a State whose conduct has been found by multiple international bodies as amounting to genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes". The experts made clear that "full suspension is not a matter of political discretion but a legal imperative incumbent on the European Union, and represents the minimum measure required to align its actions with its obligations under international law".

The extent to which the EU has departed from its own foundational values where Israel is concerned is striking, though not unprecedented. For decades, Palestinian civil society organisations have been [appealing](#) to the EU to uphold its stated aims, and the binding international obligations of its Member States, by vindicating the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. These appeals, alongside the urgent pleas of Palestinians facing accelerated destruction, dispossession and erasure, have evidently fallen on deaf ears.

By continuing to afford Israel preferential access to the European market, the EU not only shields its longstanding impunity but actively rewards conduct that egregiously violates the most fundamental provisions of international law - an example of which can be found in the recent passing of the Penal Bill (Amendment No. 159) (Death Penalty for Terrorists) into law, despite it egregiously violating the human rights of Palestinians in the OPT). This stance runs diametrically opposed to EU Member States' obligations under the Genocide Convention; the Geneva Conventions of 1949 (including their Additional Protocols); the Apartheid Convention; the Arms Trade Treaty; the Draft Articles on State Responsibility; the EU Common Position; numerous and repeated determinations by the International Court of Justice; and established norms of customary international law.

At this juncture, only immediate and concrete action can begin to restore the EU's credibility and standing within the international community. Anything less will remain devoid of meaning to the Palestinian people and will further erode the bloc's claim to principled leadership as it props up a rogue, genocidal State.

Accordingly, the EU and its 27 Member States must, at a minimum:

1. Ensure the immediate termination of the EU-Israel Association Agreement, including all economic, trade and institutional cooperation;
2. Outline and implement concrete follow-up measures for Member States, in line with their binding obligations to prevent and punish the crime of genocide and to respect and ensure respect for the Geneva Conventions of 1949, which includes: imposing a full arms embargo; cutting diplomatic and trade relations, including ending all exploitation of Palestinian maritime resources and energy deals with Israel; imposing comprehensive sanctions; and pursuing accountability;
3. Implement the [2004](#), [2024](#), and [2025](#) Advisory Opinions of the International Court of Justice, by ensuring it is not aiding, assisting, or maintaining the unlawful occupation and ceasing all forms of complicity with Israel's illegal occupation and genocide; and
4. Request the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to expedite the investigation into the Situation in Palestine with full resources and onsite visits as promised in December 2022, and fully comply with the arrest warrants issued against Netanyahu and Gallant.

Signatories:

- The Palestinian Human Rights Organisations Council (PHROC) (representing eight Palestinian human rights NGOs)
- Palestinian NGO Network (representing 139 Palestinian NGOs)
- Academic Boycott Campaign in Germany (ABC DE)
- ActionAid Denmark
- Active Citizens Movement (ACM)
- Antigone - Global Justice Initiative vzw
- Asia Pacific Network of Environmental Defenders
- Association Belgo-Palestinienne WB
- Association France Palestine Solidarité (AFPS)
- Australian Centre for International Justice

- Belgian Academics and Artists for Palestine (BA4P)
- BDS Movement
- Campaign Against Arms Trade
- Culture de Palestine
- Defence for Children International
- Dutch Scholars for Palestine
- ECCP (European Coordination of Committees and Associations for Palestine)
- European Legal Support Center
- European Trade Union Network for Justice in Palestine
- Forsvar folkeretten (Defend International Law)
- Habitat International Coalition
- ICAHD UK
- Independent Jewish Voices (Canada)
- Institute NOVACT of Nonviolence
- International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)
- Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign
- Just Peace Advocates/Mouvement Pour Une Paix Juste
- Law for Palestine
- Leiden Scholars for Palestine
- Media Review Network
- No Peace Without Justice
- Ontario Palestinian Rights Association
- Palestinian and Jewish Unity (PAJU)
- Palestinian Feminist Collective

- Pax Christi International
- Plateforme des ONG françaises pour la Palestine
- Sadaka -The Ireland Palestine Alliance
- Saferworld
- Save Our Sacred Lands
- SETEM Hego Haizea
- Solidarity Collective (Hertie School, Berlin)
- SUDS - Associació internacional de Solidaritat i Cooperació
- The Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations (SOMO)
- The Palestinian Solidarity Association in Sweden (PGS)
- Trade Union Friends of Palestine (TUFP)
- UvA Staff for Palestine (US4P)
- World BEYOND War